VOL. 9 NO. 12
OCTOBER 1979
ISSUE NO. 194

RAIL TRAVEL NEWS

50¢

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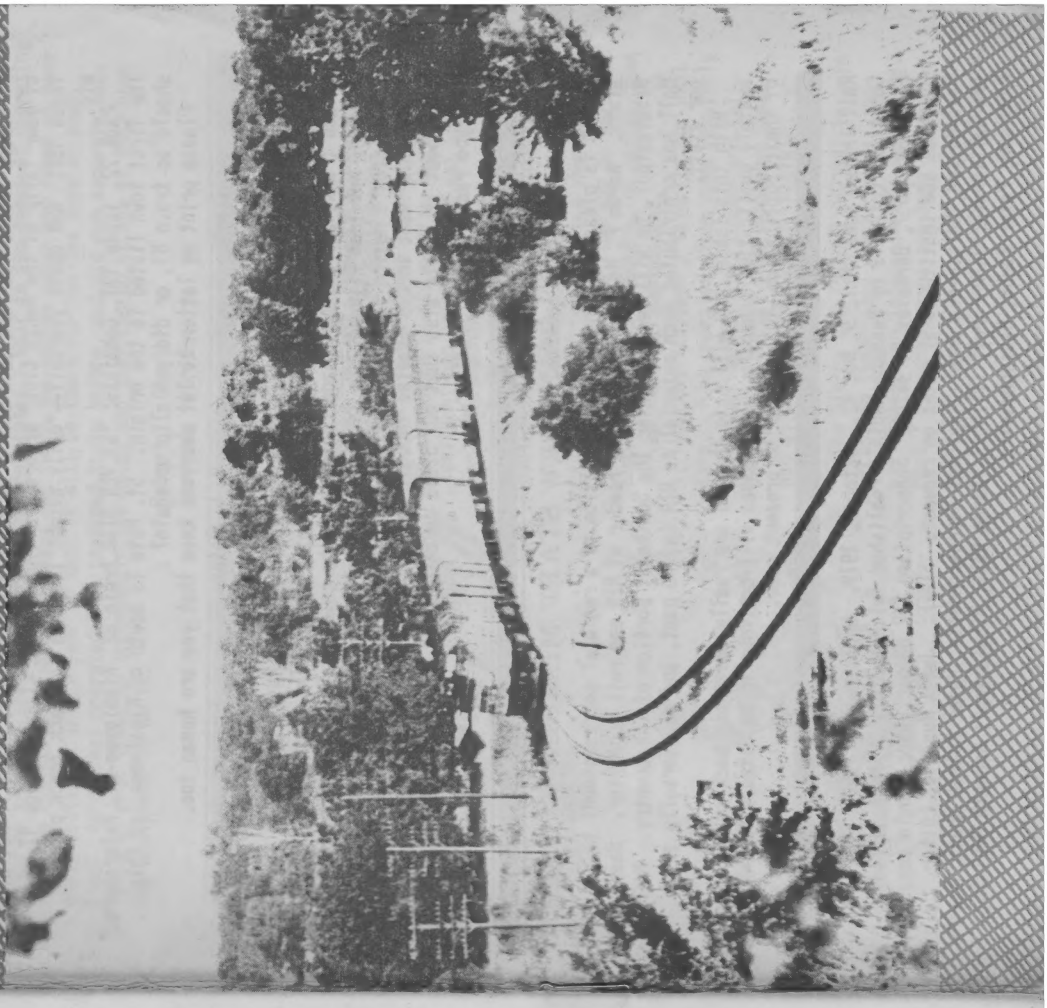

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FIRST CLASS

ON THE COVER

Another Amtrak train on the "hit list"--the LONE STAR. When Paul Rayton photographed the train on August 29, it was running southbound about 20 minutes late and approaching the town of Paul's Valley, Oklahoma, about 40 miles south of Oklahoma City. The train has a consist of three low-level cars, three Hi-levels, and three low-levels, hauled by two SDP40F engines with #504 at the front. This issue gives our most up-to-date information about the on-again, off-again Amtrak train cutbacks, including the LONE STAR. We also report on the disastrous derailment of the combined SOUTHWEST LIMITED/LONE STAR.

LETTERS

"Sweep around your own back door", as the old saying goes. Most if not all of your "Slip of the Month Club" errors are typo errors. Look on page 17 of issue 192. And quote yourself--"daily except Tuesdays for rack track patrons" etc.

Page 22, issue 191, Consists: "SILVER STAR train 82, Kissimmee-St. Petersburg." The first town listed is the origin. St. Pete is south of Kissimmee, so this should be train 81, or did you slip up again?

Please print my letter to let everyone know that you are human too.

J. L. Oates
Brandon, Florida

(Most likely the consist quoted should be train 82, St. Pete-Kissimmee. Perhaps the reader who submitted it would clarify this for us. The rack track should be a race track, and another reader notes that the patrons should be returning from Del Mar, not from Tijuana. He is right. The slip was on Amtrak's press release, and we didn't notice it (a Slip of the Month slips thru our fingers!). Amtrak's sales department in Los Angeles thought the error was hilarious when we questioned them about it. Note also that our Slips department in this issue contains a non-typo radio error. --Editor.)

RTN GAINS NEW STAFF MEMBER

RTN is pleased to announce the addition of a regional correspondent to our staff. Adron F. Hall is a long-time reader of RTN and rail supporter. Based in Mississippi, he will help us cover the Southeast portion of the country. Mr. Hall has contributed much material to RTN in the past, and now formally joins our staff.

With this issue, you will note that we are really and truly back on our twice-monthly publication schedule. The issues will continue to be dated with the month of their publication--October in the present case.

Rail Travel News, Vol. 9, No. 12. October, 1979. Whole number 194.
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Published twice monthly by Message Media, P. O. Box 9007, Berkeley CA 94709. Subscription $12.00 per year; single copy 50¢. Overseas and institutional rates on request. STAFF: James Russell, Editor. Paul Rayton, Editor-at-Large. Regional Correspondents: Peter Putnam Bretz, Southern California; Jack Ferry, Illinois; Adron Hall, Mississippi; Kenneth Maylath, Maryland; Peter Roehm, Massachusetts.

LETTERS (continued)

The FLORIDIAN was a loser from the day it began to the day it ended. Good riddance. What should have been done was for the state of Florida to promote a 403-b train to take its place between Jacksonville and Miami via Orlando. However, our brothers at NARP were too busy wringing their crying towels to work on that one. And in Georgia, ditto.

While it is stated that cancellation of these trains is a step toward loss of credibility, the reality of it is just the opposite. The only way to promote credibility is to get rid of the trains that are lightly patronized, and 120 passengers per mile is not a good showing when that is a peak time, and most of the year it carries a much smaller number. Trains cannot and should not be run 365 days a year to accommodate a few days of peak loads.

As for the CHAMPION and SILVER METEOR, both of these trains were down to 10-12 cars and not filled to capacity most of the time. The few days a year that there are peak loads requiring much more than the present 18-car train, can be accommodated by separate sections over the entire routes. What is the sense of operating separate trains with twice the crews and twice the motive power and twice as many empty seats 365 days a year so that it will be there for the few days of peak load? Amtrak has operated this combined train before, and did run separate sections at peak times to accommodate the need, and they can do it now if they have the equipment to do it.

Robert T. Clark
Sanford, Florida

SIERRA RAILROAD MAY BE ABANDONED

The 57.43-mile Sierra Railroad in the Sierra foothills of California, between Oakdale and Tuolumne, is going to be sold or abandoned by its owners, the Crocker family of San Francisco, it was learned early this month.

The railroad's freight business has been running a deficit, and this year its passenger business also has run in the red because of the gasoline shortage. It is reported that the line may be sold to Louisiana-Pacific Company, or application may be made for abandonment.

The road has been a favorite for rail fans, as it operates steam runs regularly throughout the spring, summer and fall. On Nov 3 a special double-header steam run will be made (see RAIL FANTRIPS, p. 22).

The Sierra was founded in 1897 to gain access to lumber and mining areas, and has remained an independently-owned railroad. Passenger runs are made between Jamestown and Oakdale. The railroad connects with the SP and Santa Fe at Oakdale.

★ DEADLY DERAILMENT OF SOUTHWEST LIMITED

The first SOUTHWEST LIMITED that left Los Angeles under the altered Oct 1 schedule, re-routed thru Lawrence, Kansas, derailed at about 6:10am on Oct 2 less than a mile west of the Lawrence station. The train was combined with the LONE STAR, as that train's operation, which was to have ended Sep 30, was ordered continued by a Federal court. Two Amtrak employees were killed in the wreck, making it the deadliest Amtrak accident since the 1971 derailment of the CITY OF NEW ORLEANS, in which 11 were killed. Dead were Robert Charles, bartender, of Omaha, who was making his next-to-last trip before retirement; and T. R. Sligh, sleeping car porter from Chicago. Twenty persons were reported admitted to hospitals, with five of them in intensive care, and 49 others were treated for injuries. There were 177 people aboard the combined train--158 passengers, 14 Amtrak employees, and 5 Santa Fe crewmen.

Investigators found that the train's speed recorders had registered a speed of 78mph on a 30-mph speed limit curve just before the train derailed, evidently from centrifugal force. The track was reported to have been in good condition, and no defects in the three engines had been reported. A 30mph speed limit sign before the sharp curve was knocked down when Santa Fe men examined the tracks, and it is not known if it was standing when the train passed. The engineer, L. H. Graham of Mission, Kansas, was hospitalized and investigators could not interview him until his condition improved. It appeared that his testimony might hold the key to the cause of the wreck--why he was operating the train at over twice the speed limit. Graham had not operated a train on the new route in 8 years, and there were suspicions stated that he was not familiar enough with the route to know where he was. The 78mph speed would not have permitted the train to stop safely at the Lawrence station a short distance ahead. Santa Fe requires a training run over a route that an engineer has not run in a year or more, but it was not immediately known whether Graham had had such a refresher run.

Only the last car of the 18-car train did not derail. The consist and its fate are given here: engine 501 (on at Newton KS, from LONE STAR), on its side; engines 504 and 532, on their sides; baggage car 1207, bottoms up at angle; baggage 1263, upright at an angle; dorm car 2292, went up embankment and struck house; coaches 9922 and 9953, ditto; coach 9911 and lounge 3352, upright at an angle; diner 8030, smashed and mangled; sleeper 2203 "Silver Swan", upright at an angle; sleeper 2629 "Pacific Ridge" and sleeper 2832 "Keene Valley", lying on side crosswise; (cars from LONE STAR, on at Newton KS:) sleeper 2220 "Indian Squaw", lying on side crosswise; diner 8061, upright at an angle; coaches 9929, 9925, 9908, upright at an angle; lounge 3382, upright at an angle; sleeper 2350 "Regal Dome" (not a dome car), not derailed. The last 3 cars were the Dallas section of the LONE STAR. The house that was hit by part of the train was at 5th and Tennessee Streets in Lawrence. The house was occupied, but no one in it was injured. The train was running 40 minutes late at the time of the wreck, but reports were that the crew had not been attempting to make up time. Other portions of the run had been covered in normal times: the train had averaged 68mph between Newton and Emporia, 53 mph between Emporia and Topeka, and 47mph between Topeka and the crash site.

Track repairs were completed by Wednesday, so that a detour was no longer needed. On Oct 2 a makeup train left Kansas City to take the stranded passengers on to their destinations. The makeup train was composed of cars from the last westbound run of the NATIONAL LIMITED, and had the following consist: engine 265 (F40PHR); cars 2991 "Beatrice V. MacDonald" sleeper, Amdinette 20223, Amcoaches 21859, 21802, 21135, 21801. It left Kansas City at 2pm.

★ SUPERLINER TRAIN CRASHES

Amtrak's northbound SHAWNEE, train 392, composed of five Superliner coaches and a GE-built diesel engine, crashed headon into a stationary ICG freight train

at Harvey IL, about 30 miles south of Chicago, at 8:58pm on Oct 12. The engineer and brakeman of the ICG freight #51 were killed, and the engineer of the Amtrak train, also an ICG employee, was critically injured. The train was carrying about 250 passengers, mostly college students, and about 45 on the SHAWNEE were treated at hospitals. One passenger was not found until 4 hours after the wreck, lying in some shrubbery along the right of way. Apparently a switching error put the two trains on the same track. The freight was waiting for the SHAWNEE to pass, but the latter, traveling at about 30mph, struck the first engine of the freight headon, pushing it under the second freight engine and itself climbing over the lead freight unit. The first Superliner coach turned on its side. Damage to the Amtrak equipment was as follows: engine 715, $500,000; coach 34019, $125,000; coach 34018, $75,000; coach 34021, $80,000; coach 34017, $35,000. Lead ICG loco 3000 suffered $500,000 damage, loco 3029 $350,000, and 3050 $2,000. The piggyback train, bound for New Orleans, was standing on main track 3 when the SHAWNEE approached on main track 4 and was switched onto track 3. Buses were substituted for commuter trains on the line following the accident, which occurred about 600 feet south of the Harvey ICG station.

★ FIVE AMTRAK RUNS ARE FINALLY DISCONTINUED

Of the five trains on the final Amtrak "hit list", only the NATIONAL LIMITED and the HILLTOPPER actually made their last runs on Sep 30. The other 3 trains--the FLORIDIAN, LONE STAR and NORTH COAST HIAWATHA--were retained a little longer by court action. On Sep 28, as reported last issue, a federal judge in Wichita ordered the 3 trains continued temporarily. Amtrak sent officials to discuss the matter with the judge, and he reversed himself, declaring on Oct 4 that the three could be dropped. However, on the following day a federal appeals court in Denver reversed that decision, ordering the trains to continue pending an Oct 26 hearing. In addition the city of Dayton OH filed a suit to keep the NATIONAL LIMITED running. An appeals court accordingly issued a restraining order for that train. However, on Sep 30 Chief Justice Warren Burger signed an order that cancelled that ruling, and the NATIONAL was permitted to be dropped after that date. In the Denver case, Supreme Court Justice Byron White on Oct 8 ordered the ruling cancelled, and Amtrak was then free to drop the remaining three runs. The runs of the NORTH COAST HIAWATHA that left Chicago on Oct 6 and Seattle on Oct 5 were the last for that train. The last LONE STAR (combined with the SOUTHWEST LIMITED between Chicago and Newton KS) and last FLORIDIAN left their points of origin on Oct 8. During the few days of their extended lives these trains were operated as only a skeleton service, generally without sleeping cars, and without reservations. A sample consist is that of the NORTH COAST HIAWATHA that left Seattle on Oct 1: it consisted of locomotive 247, heater car 661, coach 5429, dome lounge-dorm 9813 "Silver Cup", and coach 5666. The Denver court case was brought by Kansas, Minnesota, and Nashville, and it is believed that the Oct 26 hearing will still be held and its result can be appealed to the full Supreme Court. The city of Dayton appealed its case concerning the NATIONAL to the full Supreme Court and was turned down on Oct 9.

★ CALIFORNIA TO GET TWO NEW TRAINS

Amtrak and Caltrans finally reached agreement on 403-b partial state funding to save the SAN JOAQUIN, on Oct 5. There had been no break in service on the run. At the same time an agreement was made to initiate two more 403-b Amtrak runs in California: a seventh roundtrip will be added to the San Diego-Los Angeles SAN DIEGAN route, and a second SAN JOAQUIN run will be inaugurated. The new SAN JOAQUIN will run south in the morning and north the same afternoon. Target date for both these operations is Jan 15, 1980. The second SAN JOAQUIN will have bus connections at both ends of its route, as at present.

URBAN-SUBURBAN TRANSIT

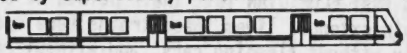
CONRAIL COMMUTER CRASH: 430 INJURED

Four Conrail commuter trains were involved in a chain-reaction crash at the 52nd Street station in southwest Philadelphia at 8:20am on Oct 16. Over 430 people were reported injured, with 12 in serious condition, and 25 admitted to hospitals. The accident began when 2 cars of an 11-car train from Media came uncoupled. Another, 4-car Media train tried to push the two stalled cars, and a third train, also from Media, stopped behind it. However, it was hit from behind by a fourth train from West Chester. The cars rammed each other, derailing 10 of the 14. Most of the injured were in the third train. About 1200 commuters were aboard the affected cars. An estimate of $1 million in damage was made.

SP COMMUTE TRAIN SERVICE TO BE SAVED

Southern Pacific's San Francisco-San Jose commute service has been saved by an agreement reached between the railroad and Caltrans on Oct 12 and publicly announced Oct 15. The details of the agreement must be worked out yet and approved by the ICC, PUC, and county supervisors, but in general it calls for the SP to continue operating the trains, while Caltrans will own the equipment, stations, etc., (either buying or leasing them) but evidently not the trackage. Caltrans will develop the service thru promotion and improvement. Extension of the run beyond the existing 47 miles will require a separate agreement. The initial agreement is to be for 10 years, with renewals possible in 5-year periods. It is estimated that the changeover could come about by the end of 1979. Ridership on the line has increased 50%--to 21,000 daily--as a result of the ticket discounts described here last issue. The announcement came as the state PUC was about to begin an investigation of the adequacy of service on the line.

BART RESUMED LIMITED service on Oct 4, with trains running only between Lafayette and 24th & Mission (San Francisco) stations on weekdays from 6am to 6pm. The trains are operated by supervisory personnel while the labor dispute that began Aug 31 continues.



SAN FRANCISCO MUNI system will begin operation of its new Boeing-Vertol articulated streetcars--which it is calling "Metroliners"--on Jan 14, on the N-Judah line only, running in the subway above the BART tunnel on Market Street. The other streetcar lines will temporarily continue surface operation with the old PCC cars. Transportation Secretary Neil Goldschmidt was in San Francisco Oct 12 to look at the new cars and to state that the DOT is willing to help the city pay for the repair of its cable car system (see last issue). The California Street cable car line is expected to be back in operation by Nov 1.

BERKELEY-SAN FRANCISCO FERRY, subsidized for 8 weeks provided it attracts 450 riders daily (see last issue) has averaged only 175 and the subsidy is being discontinued, with the last run being Oct 19 (first run was Sep 26). But supporters vow to continue Friday-only service without subsidy, using a smaller, more economical vessel.

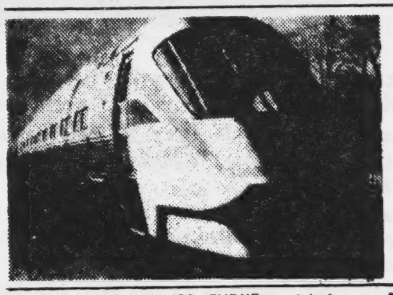
LOS ANGELES BUSES have been running again since Sep 19, after 23 days of non-operation, while union negotiations continue, but the situation remains tenuous and strikers rejected one contract offer earlier in October.

METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY'S chairman, Harold L. Fisher, is resigning effective Nov 16 but will remain as acting chairman until January. It is said that his resignation came after pressure from NY Governor Carey, following complaints and problems in New York City's transit system, including flaws in new subway cars, growing crime, and other ills.

PUBLIC TRANSIT RIDERSHIP has increased nationwide since the gasoline shortage that began late last spring. New York and Philadelphia patronage is up 15-20%, but now has dropped back to about 8% higher than last year, as the gas crunch appears to ease. But OPEC nations will meet again soon and are once more talking of higher petroleum prices. Gasoline usage is down, especially on weekends, with the dollar-a-gallon price now nationwide.

AMTRAK'S TAKEOVER OF the Chicago-Valparaiso commuter line is now set for Oct 29. The takeover from Conrail was legislated by the Amtrak Improvement Act just passed. Amtrak said it will assign ex-CNW double-decker cars to the run after converting them to push-pull operation and equipping them with head-end electric power. A sum of $2,942,178 has been allocated for this purpose, with the 12 cars to be finished by late 1980. The equipment will be used interchangeably on the "Valpo" route and the Detroit-Jackson service. No schedule changes are planned. Amtrak said it will recover its refurbishing costs in less than four years because of greater economy of operation. Amtrak's operation of the Valpo line will run until Apr 1, 1981, after which local subsidies will be required.

LOS ANGELES SUBWAY may become a reality. A state bill was finally passed in late September to provide $112 million over 3 years as the state's share of financing an 18-mile rapid transit subway that would run from Union Station under Wilshire Blvd. to North Hollywood. Federal approval has not yet been given, but this action was the first step in seeking federal funds for the work.



The skin and much of the interior of this new rail transit car by Budd Co. is light and durable Allegheny Ludlum stainless steel. Many more of our products, for motors, controls and communications, are facilitating the growth of rapid transit.

Allegheny Ludlum Industries in current ads signals its involvement in rapid transit materials and supplies.

CHICAGO'S MAYOR BYRNE said in early October that city planners are studying a possible subway from the Loop to the Southwest Side, under the Stevenson Expressway, and a monorail connection from Navy Pier to the rapid transit system. In other Chicago news, the CTA raises the basic fare from 50¢ to 60¢ on Nov 4.

N&W RAILWAY COMMUTERS in Chicago will find on Nov 1 that the bargain monthly pass is discontinued and fares are increased, bringing trip costs up 100% in some cases. The RTA's Board made the decision in September. The Rock Island strike that ended in early October brought many new riders to the N&W.

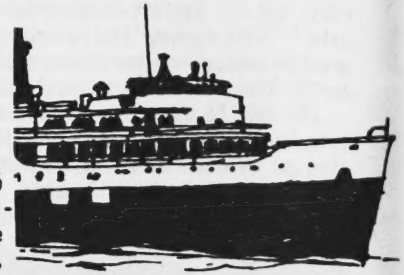
LOS ANGELES COUNTY supervisors early this month called on Gov. Brown to ask the Legislature to consider a law banning public transit strikes--requiring that all public transit disputes be submitted to binding arbitration. California has been hit by several massive transit strikes this summer and fall in the face of a gasoline crisis, and transit riders and supporters find their irritability high.

CHICAGO'S SCRAPPING OF the Crosstown Expressway plans has given officials $200 million to apply to transit projects in this fiscal year, and the city announced early in October that the biggest mass transit program in its history would begin,

including a rapid transit extension to O'Hare Airport, scheduled for construction beginning next spring. Other CTA projects announced include purchase of 125 more Big Bend articulated buses, preparation of transit vehicles for winter weather, and purchase of 300 more rapid transit cars, plus other transit improvements.

RAIL CANADA

THE "PRINCESS MARGUERITE" mini-steamer between Seattle and Victoria B.C. will be scrapped after the 1979 season, according to the B.C. transport minister who made the announcement Oct 5. Fraser, who is not minister in charge, came under attack from labour officials who want a replacement ship built in Canada if the "heritage vessel" actually ispulled from service. Both Premier Bennett and tourism minister Don Phillips, who are in charge, were in Japan at the time. A fight over the continuation of "Marguerite" service is pending. The 1979 passenger count exceeded 360,000, up from 275,000 in 1978. Some 400 were left in Seattle the last Saturday of the 1979 season, Oct 6, and passengers also were refused in Victoria on Oct 7 as the ship filled to capacity again. Supporters of the mini-cruise vessel are asked to write B.C. Premier Bill Bennett, Parliament Building, Victoria, B.C., Canada, urging him to keep the ship. Letters from the U.S. and Canada both will be helpful.



ARRIVAL-DEPARTURE TIMES for the two transcontinental trains at Vancouver (tentative) effective Oct 28 are: SUPER CONTINENTAL, train 4 leave 12:30pm; train 3 arrive 2750pm. CANADIAN, train 2 leave 2:10pm; train 1 arrive 1:55 pm. On that date the VIA trains will be consolidated at the CN station in Vancouver, with the CP station no longer used for passenger trains.

MONTREAL TRANSIT SYSTEM went on strike Oct 12, the fifth strike in five years. Municipal maintenance workers struck, joined by transit commission office workers.

CP RAIL ANNOUNCED that it will suspend auto and passenger ferry service between Vancouver and Nanaimo, B.C., with its "Princess of Vancouver" vessel starting Jan 4 and continuing thru mid-May, as a cost-cutting measure.

THE SECOND ISSUE of Trans-Action has appeared. The 52-page, RTN-size quarterly is published by consumer action group Transport 2000 with the help of Transit Ottawa, an affiliated organization. Yearly subscription is $4, or is included in the $10 individual membership fee in Transport 2000. Address is Box 300, Station A, Ottawa, Ont., Canada K1N 8V3. Donations to T2000 are tax-deductible in Canada.

A PROPOSED LINE to be built by CP Rail for GO Transit use between Toronto Union Station and Milton is being opposed by residents of Etobicoke who claim that it will damage the environment and cause noise and danger to children.

STUDY FAVOURS RAIL: Douglas Turner of the Ashburne Foundation, Toronto, and Harry Gow, President of Transport 2000 Canada, jointly announced in September the release of a study on transport and the public interest, with particular emphasis on the needs of Ontario and Quebec. The report criticizes the bureaucratic stranglehold on transport planning in Canada, and proposes means to allow greater public and partliamentary control over development in that field. It is in direct contradiction to leaked Ministry of Transport documents that called for reduced public participation and massive rail cuts (see last issue). The report recommends greater public input thru strengthened federal parliamentary committees, reviews of policy options such as reduced spending on marginal air programs, and the immediate purchase of a fleet of LRC passenger trains.

NEW YORK CONTINUES THE RAIL RENAISSANCE

The future of rail service in New York looked bleak as 1974 began. The State was threatened with massive branch line abandonments, the downgrading of the Erie Lackawanna mainline across New York's Southern Tier counties seemed likely, and the D&H Railway was on the verge of bankruptcy. Countless businesses were facing the prospect of moving to new locations--possibly out of the state--or diverting their traffic to other modes. Decreasing reliability of rail freight service was also discouraging the expansion of existing plants and inhibiting efforts to attract new industry to the state.

Rail passenger service badly needed new equipment and improved track and facilities to stem the loss of riders and reduce operating losses. The fledgling Amtrak, operating with a ragtag fleet of 30-year-old cars, had alienated most of those who had given the train a whirl during the brief 1973-74 gas shortage.

Beginning in 1974 when New Yorkers approved the $250 million Railroad Bond, the rail system began to come alive. The bond began to stimulate growth and prosperity. Altho several major projects are only now getting under way because of delayed financing, all 1974 rail bond funds are fully committed. The decline of New York's rail system has been halted and reversed. Industry is showing renewed interest and reliance on rail freight, passengers are returning to railroads and public transit usage is increasing dramatically.

New York has rescued its railroads, but now the energy shortage is placing new demands on them and on public transit as well. Amtrak ridership in New York is expected to increase by 100% during the next five years. Recent figures showed subway ridership up by 70,000 riders per day, but ridership up by 20,000 and commuter rail by 10,500. The need for more equipment and greater operational flexibility hardly needs further demonstration.

In November, New York voters will go to the polls and vote on a new bond act. The 1979 Bond Act zeroes in on the conservation needs by increasing the capacity of rail and commuter systems and by making roads more fuel-efficient. It has a formidable title--The Energy Conservation Through Improved Transportation Bond Act of 1979--but it is simple in structure, direct in its objectives and as timely as tomorrow's newspaper.

The new Bond Act provides $400 million in state funds, to be added to $447 million from other sources, to provide $847 million in total commitment. Supporters of the Act list the following benefits to be achieved:

PASSENGER SERVICE:

High-speed Empire Service: Extension of high-speed service will not only bring about a shorter NYC-Niagara Falls schedule, but will also open up the benefits of high-speed travel for many New Yorkers. Continuing work will involve selected track and signal improvements between Buffalo, Rochester, Syracuse, Utica and Schenectady to permit passenger train speeds of up to 100mph. As a result, Empire Corridor ridership is expected to increase threefold--to an annual volume of three million and provide the adequate capacity required for continued energy considerations. A rehabilitation of the existing station and construction of new parking facilities will be undertaken at Albany/Rensselaer to accommodate the increased ridership already apparent on this portion of Empire Service.

COMMUTER PROGRAM:

The Bond program would provide a total of $232 million ($170 million in state funds and $112 in TBTA funds) to continue MTA passenger service investments to Dutchess-Westchester and Long Island. The proposal calls for 130 new cars and 15 rail diesel cars for the LIRR, Conrail and New Haven railroads. It also contains a project aimed at relieving congestion and delays at Penn Station. The new facility would save energy and relieve congestion by allowing LIRR trains to be stored

in Manhattan rather than having to be shuttled out empty to several storage yards on Long Island. It would also provide a connection between Penn Station and the Westside freight line which could be used to serve the new convention center and provide commuter rail and Amtrak service from upstate New York direct to Penn Station.

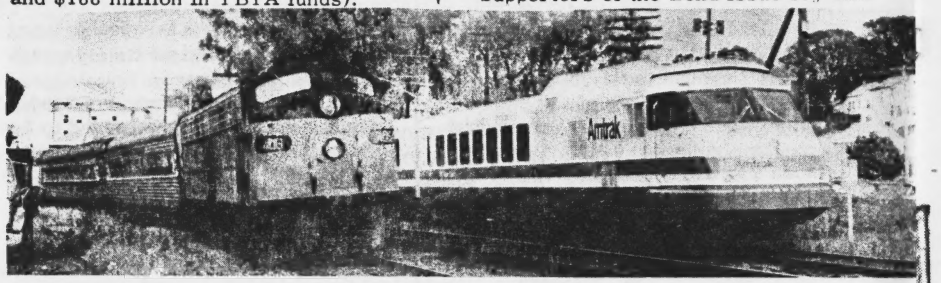
DOWNSTATE SUBWAY PROGRAM:

The Bond would include funds for 540 new and rehabilitated subway cars at a cost of $288 million ($100 in bond funds and $188 million in TBTA funds).

($70 million from the Bond) for upstate freight needs. This includes branchline rehabilitation and mainline service--especially the mainline across the Southern Tier from the Pennsylvania border to Suffern. The program also provides $66 million ($34 from the Bond) for improvements to NYC-LIRR freight service.

The proposed program also provides $100 million in state funds to build or improve local roads and streets, with projects being selected locally.

Supporters of the Bond issue say that



The old and the new: This October is the target date for replacement of all conventional equipment with new, such as this Amtrak Turboliner, on the Empire Corridor. Photo courtesy of NY State Department of Transportation.

The present fleet of subway cars numbers 7000. Of these, over 300 will be over-age, over 35 years, by 1981. An average of 200 subway cars should be replaced each year to cut the cost of maintenance. The 540 cars are just a beginning, but a needed starting point. Previously, 80% Federal money was available for new cars, but in the coming years Federal funds will be exhausted, being used for other transit priority projects.

FREIGHT IMPROVEMENTS:

The program provides $171 million

it is necessary to order to continue the activities that have successfully begun under the 1974 Bond Act. The rail preservation program that Act enabled has "exceeded expectations", with financially-shaky rail lines refinanced, essential freight services maintained, and not one NY industry lost because of a lack of rail transportation--indeed new industries have been attracted. The decline of passenger and commuter service has been reversed, and NY state will have the first high-speed (110 mph) service in the country.

The above article was prepared from material furnished by the New York State Department of Transportation.

EXPRESS AD

Dissected, analyzed, unclothed, the NAKED AMTRAK LAW is set forth by none other than the low-cost rail transit catalyst. There in his unofficial 1979 UPDATED AMTRAK LAW, stand MONTREALER, NATIONAL LIMITED, SHENANDOAH, CARDINAL, FLORIDIAN, LONE STAR, PIONEER, NORTH COAST HIAWATHA, DESERT WIND, to stun Amtrak, to shock the Congress at this mirror-view by catalyst Robert J. Swan of what they have legislated...as oil production staggers. $10, Box 1866, Long Beach CA 90801.

RTN ADVERTISING RATES: Express Ads $1 per line of 80 spaces. Display ads $1.25 per square inch. RAIL TRAVEL NEWS, Box 9007, Berkeley CA 94709.

A LAST RIDE ON THE FLORIDIAN

by Brian Cutter

Sooner or later something had to be done to the FLORIDIAN. This classic example of Amtrak middle-level mismanagement was to end Oct 1. Something HAD to be done--but another political decision was not the answer.

True to recent form, on a September day the southbound train came into Chicago's Union Station from Amtrak's 16th Street yard at 9:15pm, 15 minutes late. The 95 passengers boarded, and departure was nine minutes late--9:39.

At State Line Tower, where the Chicago & Western Indiana ends and the Louisville & Nashville (ex-Monon) begins, we waited 15 minutes for an N&W freight to go trolling by us. After it cleared, our 8-car train went thru the interlocking and onto the L&N.

In the darkened dome of ex-BLUE BIRD coach 9561 only two of us were enjoying the flat countryside of northwest Indiana in the light of a harvest moon as the FLORIDIAN sped toward Lafayette (or, as the natives spell it, LaFayette) at 60mph. At Shelby, someone had shot out the signal in both directions. Vandalism IS everywhere.

The train crew came up to the dome on one of their frequent inspections of their train. The conductor shone his flashlight on me. "Haven't I seen you before?" he asked.

I had seen him before--last April en route to Lafayette.

"I remember you now," the conductor continued. "You were with us last April. How you been?"

From that point to the Lafayette yards it was like old home week. Talk of the train's impending discontinuance was the main topic.

We rolled across the Wide Water Canal and into the Lafayette yards--the crew change point for the L&N between Chicago and Louisville--21 minutes late, thanks to the shot-out signal.

The change made, we headed down Fifth Street, past the Purina Chow feed store (the last Monon passenger station in Lafayette, built in the early 1960s) and the original limestone passenger station to the Lahr House hotel, two blocks east of the Tippecanoe County Courthouse.

The Lahr House is something in itself--five grades below the Fort Dearborn in Chicago, and by far the worst of the non-railroad properties at which Amtrak stops nationwide. On my April visit, a drunk kicked in the glass door, and in July a night manager was shot by one of the guests. Some place for a passenger station! The old limestone passenger station is vacant, and would make a better choice.

We departed the Lahr House at 12:51 am, 18 minutes late. The new train crew was questioning the proposed Chicag[illegible]dianapolis "hospital train", which will run on the Monon between Chicago and Crawfordsville, thence on Conrail (ex-NYC) to Indianapolis. This train is designed primarily to shuttle equipment between the 16th Street coach yard and the Beech Grove shops, and comes with a $3.7 million price tag for track reconstruction between Crawfordsville and Indianapolis. Amtrak will also have to build and pay for a turnout to the line at Crawfordsville.

South of Crawfordsville, we began to run into a very thick fog. From the dome, you could see very little in front of you. From the cab of the lead F40, the strobe lights warned oncom-

ing traffic of the train's approach. This fog would plague us nearly all the way to Louisville.

At Greencastle, we met the northward #94/56 from Louisville (or should I say #216, for that is the L&N number for the northbound FLORIDIAN, the southbound being 215), then started down the first of many hills between Greencastle and the Ohio River.

We reached Bloomington five minutes late, at 3:14am, at the shelter built just for passenger service. After boarding no one, we departed, thru McDoel yard and into the fog again.

At Bedford--one of the three Monon cities where all trains run in the street --we made an unscheduled stop in the town square. A quick look from the rear of the dome told the reason why: a man emerged from a bakery at trackside and handed up a box to the train crew. In the box were a dozen glazed donuts for the cooks in the dining car, a "thank you" for keeping the coffee pot on all night. This unusual practice did not cost us a minute's time, and made for excellent morale.

At Pekin, as the engineer blew for the crossing, the lights in the gas station across the highway came on! The brakeman told me that the station owner rigged up a system by which the lights come on in the station when the southbound FLORIDIAN passes and blows for the crossing. Don't know if I can believe it...

We crossed the Ohio River on the Kentucky & Indiana Terminal bridge as dawn was breaking over Louisville (why was the famous "Bridge to Louisville" sign unlit?) and the river valley. After quite a bit of alley running on the terminal road, we arrived at the deserted Auto-Train terminal 12 minutes early, at 7:37am, Eastern time.

The Louisville terminal is a good idea--next to the main line, separated by automatic power switches at both ends, with a yard nearby in case of equipment trouble. The only drawback is the $13 price tag for a cab to center city Louisville. Needless to say, there wasn't much of a traffic jam at the terminal as our train was serviced under the "shed" (one track only). The station was spacious, with plenty of seats (half of them folded up), plenty of choices in the vending machines (most of them sold out), and not a

Courier-Journal in sight. The station exterior is as faded as the financial condition of the company (Auto-Train) for which this was built, and the interior decoration might have been done by Timothy Leary. However, there was one bright spot (besides the interior) in the station: Kentucky Association of RR Passengers membership forms were there--in greater quantity than FLORIDIAN schedules.

We pulled out of the Louisville terminal right on time at 8:04am and passed thru the south end of L&N's Strawberry Yard, heading for Nashville. The track was so bad that we might have been back on the Milwaukee Road and roaring thru Portage, Wisconsin. It had been awhile since I could pour no more than a third of a cup of coffee, and I almost forgot my years of training on the EMPIRE BUILDER between Chicago and St. Paul as I had breakfast next to the South Louisville dead line.

As we passed thru bluegrass country, our train picked up more time--time which we would need as we approached Nashville. Crossing the Cumberland River, we took the scenic route--all the way around the north end of Nashville,

WHAT TO DO IF YOU ARE HEADING SOUTH

8:30 p.m.	Welcome Aboard! Depart Chicago.
9:00–11:00 p.m.*	Late Showing of Feature Film (Recreation Lounge Car). POPCORN!
All Night	Recreation Lounge Car — Open for purchase of Coffee and Sandwiches.
2nd Day	
6:00– 9:00 a.m.	Complimentary Wake-Up Coffee and Orange Juice (Recreation Lounge Car).
7:00– 9:00 a.m.	Complimentary Continental Breakfast in Bed (Sleeping Car Passengers Only). Ask your Porter.
10:00–10:30 a.m.	Complimentary Coffee (Recreation Lounge Car).
10:30–11:30 a.m.	Children's Hour — Cartoons/Games (Recreation Lounge Car).
1:30– 2:30 p.m.	Bingo! (Recreation Lounge Car).
2:30– 4:30 p.m.*	2nd Feature Film (Recreation Lounge Car).
3:30– 4:30 p.m.	Complimentary Coffee and Orange Juice (Diner).
4:30– 5:30 p.m.	Complimentary Champagne Punch and Almonds (Recreation Lounge Car).
7:00– 9:00 p.m.	Game Fair (Recreation Lounge Car).
8:15 p.m.	Door Prize Drawing (Recreation Lounge Car).
9:00–11:00 p.m.*	Feature Film (Recreation Lounge Car). POPCORN!
All Night	Recreation Lounge Car — Open for purchase of Coffee and Sandwiches.
3rd Day	
Good-bye to our West Coast Florida Passengers . . .	
6:00– 9:00 a.m.	Complimentary Wake-Up Coffee and Orange Juice (Recreation Lounge Car).
7:00– 9:00 a.m.	Complimentary Continental Breakfast in Bed (Sleeping Car Passengers Only). Ask your Porter.
9:30–10:00 a.m.	Cartoons!
11:00 a.m.	Arrive Miami!

*Feature film may be shorter or longer than time indicated. Ask your PSR.

From the FLORIDIAN route brochure of 1973.

taking the better part of a half-hour. We arrived alongside the trainshed at Nashville Union Station at 10:55am, 10 minutes early.

As you ride the escalator up to station level, you are greeted by an "Amtrak welcomes you to Music City, U.S.A." sign. The ticket office and waiting room is in the former baggage annex, and is the size of the one at Duluth, Minnesota. Hardly befitting a city of 500,000 people.

One problem with Nashville, at least for an out-of-towner like me, is the difficulty of getting public transit information. I tried three times, and got cut off three times. I couldn't understand her, and she couldn't understand me.

After lunch at the Sheraton-Nashville across the street, and a photo session at the station, now under renovation to become a Federal office building, I spent the rest of the afternoon reading the five-star edition of the Nashville Banner. I had given up on seeing anything musical.

The FLORIDIAN at Nashville in the summer of 1974. Photo by Bob van Wormer.

* * *

The northbound FLORIDIAN arrived at shedside 7 minutes late, at 4:57pm. I was assigned car 9450 "Silver Bridle" --an ex-CALIFORNIA ZEPHYR car. I quickly grabbed a shot of the Tennessee State Capitol from the window, and went back to the lounge car. A man playing a musical synthesizer called "Magic Jack" was entertaining the half dozen passengers in the lounge. I was looked on as a foreigner, so I retreated to the diner. After enjoying a steak dinner, I retired to the dome, where I could watch what goes on in the evening without the noise of "Magic Jack."

The approach lights at the south throat of Strawberry Yard resembled a Christmas tree lot wired up as we rolled into the Louisville terminal again. In the dark it seemed even more deserted than in daylight. The access road lights were off, and most of those in the parking lot, and it generally looked like something that came out of the ground at sunset.

Passengers traveling between Louisville and Chicago in the lone sleeping car were victims of one of the most glaring reasons for the discontinuance of the FLORIDIAN. They were paying more than DOUBLE the coach fare for the night ($57 for a roomette; $27.50 in coach). I hope they enjoyed their night's rest.

Running thru Louisville on the K&IT means a lot of street and alley crossings. Unfortunately for some Louisvillians, they like to play a potentially deadly game called "Beat the Train". No less than nine cars tried to beat the train after the signals had activated at the crossing. Fortunately, all nine cars made it across--THIS time.

Once again across the river, past the tower at the bridge (the neon sign is STILL out) and into New Albany we creep at 10mph, by city ordinance. And the fog is again with us--not as bad as going down, but bad nevertheless. One thing about this fog, tho: from the dome you can see over the fog. And some did. More than on the southbound trip. Including the crew.

The crews. They didn't think of themselves as part of the L&N--Family Lines, etc. They thought of themselves as still being the Monon Railroad, and they didn't think too highly of the invaders from the South.

"They brought us down to their level" said one crewman. "They took all of our heavy (144-pound) rail and sent it to their lines. They replaced it with this lousy (119-pound) stuff."

And that wasn't all.

"They pick on you for the littlest things, while they let the more serious stuff go. It's ridiculous. If that's all they got to do, no wonder this railroad is going to pot as it is."

At this point, you think that Darth Vader is Superintendent of the Louisville Division.

But all the employees I talked to at length agreed on one thing: "The best thing for this railroad (Monon) to have happen is a takeover by the Southern. (Southern's takeover of the Monon--or the Monon subdivision, if you like the L&N--is a condition of the proposed Chessie-Seaboard merger. Seaboard Coast Line is the parent company of the L&N.) THEY know how to run a railroad. Sure, they'd be more strict, but on the RIGHT things--not like it is now. Too many chiefs as it is now. With the Southern, they'll be plenty of Indians around here."

"The L&N doesn't know how to run a railroad. Only thing they know is how to squeeze money out of (Monon) and not put anything back in."

"It's a crying shame."

We left Bloomington on time, and took to the passing siding at Greencastle to meet "No. 215". The nearby Monon Grill made my stomach growl as the SDP on 215 rolled by in the foggy darkness.

We left the Lahr House in Lafayette on time at 3:28am. After the crew change at Lafayette yard, we rolled under that big harvest moon thru Monon and towards South Hammond.

The conductor--the same one I had going down--came up to me right after Monon.

"How was the donut?" he asked.

"I didn't get one," I replied. "Didn't know I could."

"Boy, did YOU miss out," he said. "Those Bedford donuts are delicious." It's 4:30 in the morning and my day is already made.

Rolling thru the residential section of South Hammond, we surprise sleepy headed wives of sleepy-headed factory workers as the Sun-Times is being delivered. As dawn breaks over the horizon, we pass State Line Tower once again, and are in Illinois when all of a sudden I start getting "where are we?" inquiries. When I said "Hegewisch", they looked at me as if to ask "Where's Hegewisch?".

We survive the Chicago & Western Indiana once again, cross the Chicago River and arrive at Chicago Union Station at 6:37am, 23 minutes early.

The FLORIDIAN is a train of marked contrasts. The pride of these people--those who use it and those who work aboard this rolling museum--is deep-seated in a long tradition of passenger service. Most of us know that this train should be rerouted via Atlanta and Savannah--but those who depend on mismanaged trains never really got the message. And now it's we, the people, who are going to pay for the mistakes the FLORIDIAN has suffered in the past.

For Amtrak's "milk run," the cow has just gone dry.

Penn Central engine headed up the southbound FLORIDIAN at Louisville in July, 1972. Photo by Doug Ellis.

ABOARD THE LAST NATIONAL LIMITEDS

by George Strombeck

On the morning of Sep 30 I sat in Kansas City's station waiting for the departure of the last eastbound NATIONAL LIMITED. I picked up the Kansas City Star to read that the train had been given a temporary reprieve by the U.S. Court of Appeals in Washington--so I would not be riding on the last run after all--or so I thought at the time.

When I boarded the Amcoach at 7:15am the porter expressed hope that the train would run indefinitely. "They won't dare to take this one off, as it stops in too many important cities", he said.

It had been years since I was over this route, and a beautiful blue-sky Sunday seemed an ideal time for a train trip, whether or not it was an historic last run.

We'd barely left Kansas City when we ground to a halt. We sat for 15 minutes before the conductor announced that we were waiting for a westbound freight which was having problems with sticking brakes. He expected us to be there another hour, and he was about right.

The disabled train finally ambled past, and we were on our way again, soon following the southern bank of the Missouri River. I was surprised to see many fall colors already. I finally took the nerve to walk thru the sleeper to see whether anyone was viewing the passing scene from the Dutch door. And indeed, two railfans were already there, one identifying himself as a photographer for Passenger Train Journal. As we wound around curves I saw our exceptionally long train, with nine deadhead cars on the rear destined for Beech Grove shops outside of Indianapolis.

We arrived in St. Louis almost two hours late, due to further delays. The crossing of the Mississippi River after leaving St. Louis is spectacular. It's a shame that this view will no longer be possible from a train window.

The atmosphere aboard the train was no different from any other "typical" trip on Amtrak. A woman was returning to Philadelphia with her two kids after visiting her sister. An elderly couple were going to see a relative in Indianapolis. A college student was returning to Columbus for another week of classes, and so on.

It was not until we made our long stop in Indianapolis that it became clear that all of us were in fact on an historic trip--without realizing it! The crew boarding there informed the entire train that word had just been received that this would be the last eastbound run of the NATIONAL LIMITED, as the Supreme Court had a few hours before overturned the earlier injunction! Suddenly discussion became very lively on board. All kinds of suggestions and comments were bantered about. The discussion ranged on at a high pitch, all the way to Dayton, Ohio, where I had planned to get off. I was assured that the last westbound train, that had left New York on the 30th, would be running the next morning, so I could return home as planned.

Detraining at Dayton, I had a strange feeling come over me--knowing that I was one of the last passengers to get off a train there. I instinctively headed for the front end to watch the train leave the station for the last time eastbound. The word had already spread, as there were six others on the far east end of the platform. Then the moment came--no more time for time exposures--the horn sounded its two familiar blats. A hush fell over the group. The engineer notched the throttle while all eyes fixed on the F40PH as it rolled quietly out of the Dayton station, until one finally broke the silence by saying "There she goes--for the last time!". When I got downstairs to the waiting room I found that the station agent was also stunned by the turn of events of the past few hours.

I found a good motel just a few blocks from the station, where I was able to sleep well before the next full day of events. Monday, Oct 1 proved to be overcast and foggy. When I arrived at the Dayton Union Station it was already obvious that this was not a normal day. Two TV stations, with mini-cams and roving

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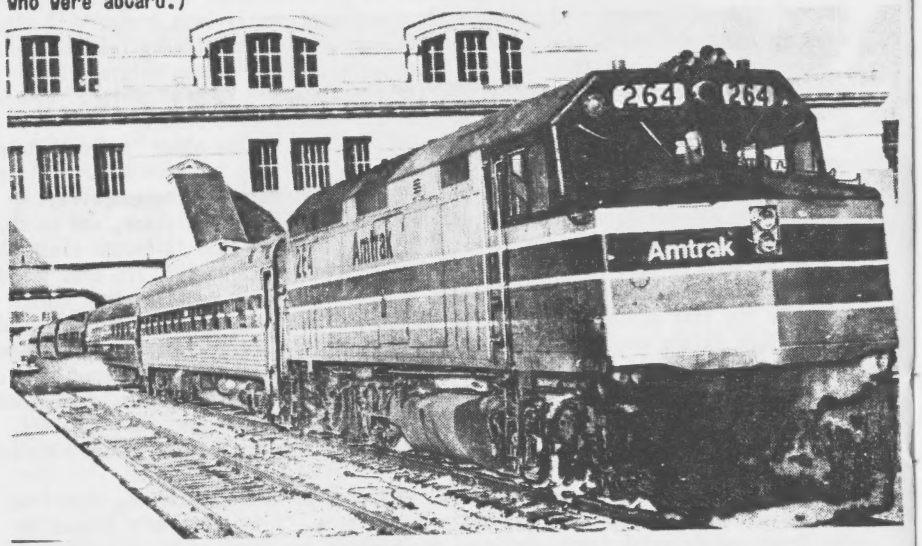
reporters, were interviewing passengers. Newspaper photographers and reporters were on hand. The agent (not the same one as yesterday) informed me matter-of-factly that the last westbound NATIONAL LIMITED would be arriving 20 minutes EARLY. I barely made it to the platform in time to photograph its arrival, swirling in thru the fog. About six other photographers shared these "last rites" with me.

Aboard the train I found an almost party atmosphere--all of these patrons knew this was the last run. We departed Dayton on time and I headed for the Amdinette for some breakfast. Here I met an elderly couple, Paul and Elsie Perdiue, who told me they were on their "honeymoon," having been married a month before. They were recording on a cassette impromptu impressions of this last run. As on any trip, the passengers one meets are a very interesting part of a train ride. One was on his way to a convention in St. Louis, while a former Amtrak employee wanted to ride over a route he sold many tickets for in the past.

The time went all too quickly. Indianapolis saw some more cars switched out for Beech Grove (including one totally burned-out Amfleet coach--see CARS & CONSISTS, this issue), and soon we were in Effingham, Illinois, where I detrained and watched (with camera clicking) the NATIONAL make its way westward one last time across Illinois.

* * *

(Newspaper reports said the train arrived in Kansas City about 40 minutes late, with 60 passengers aboard. The train was delayed by a tree that had fallen across the tracks outside of Jefferson City, Missouri. The train's passengers together moved the tree out of the way. The train's liquor supply was reported exhausted before it got out of Pennsylvania, being consumed by 200 Pittsburgh Steelers fans who were aboard.)



With the discontinuance of the NATIONAL LIMITED, the ANN RUTLEDGE, the former Chicago-St. Louis trains, were extended to run Chicago-St. Louis-Kansas City, to cover the Kansas City-St. Louis portion of the NATIONAL's route. In the photo above, taken from a color transparency by Gary Zeitler, the first eastbound ANN RUTLEDGE, train 304, is awaiting its departure from Kansas City on Oct 1. F40PHR engine 264 is heading the consist of sleeper 2911 (probably deadheading to Chicago), Amdinette 20208, and Amcoaches 21812, 21836, 21818, and 21858. The train left on time at 10:05am. Its westbound counterpart the same day, train 301, arrived Kansas City on time at 7:30pm, with engine 236 and Amfleet cars 21860, 20216 (dinette), 21200, and 21156.

Mixed Train of Thoughts

PRE-INAUGURAL RUN of the Los Angeles-Las Vegas-Ogden DESERT WIND will occur on Oct 26-27, before the Oct 28 startup of regular service. A press train will leave L.A. at 9:30am on the 26th, after 9am ceremonies featuring Amtrak Executive VP W. Clark Tyler. Arrivals will be 10am at Pasadena, 10:50 at Pomona, 11:50 at San Bernardino, 2pm at Barstow and 5:50pm at Las Vegas. The train will be on display 6-8pm at Las Vegas. The following morning, Amtrak President Alan Boyd will participate in an inaugural program at Las Vegas at 8:30am, and the train will leave there at 9am, arriving Milford at 3pm Mountain Time, arriving Salt Lake City at 7:15pm and Ogden at 8:15. There will be a tentative ceremony at Ogden at 8:30. This is not the regular train schedule. The regular train leaves L.A. at 11:25am and reaches Las Vegas at 6:50pm and Ogden at 6:15am. It leaves Ogden at 11:45pm and hits Las Vegas at 8:25am and L.A. at 4:45pm. The first westbound revenue run (train 35) leaves shortly before midnight, so it will be leaving most points on Oct 29. (Standard Time returns in the early morning of Oct 28.) At the Las Vegas ceremony, Senator Howard Cannon will christen the new train.....

★ ★ ★

THE HOOSIER STATE, the new Chicago-Indianapolis train, is expected to begin operation with the Oct 28 schedule change, as is the DESERT WIND. On Oct 29 Amtrak takes over operation of Conrail's Chicago-Valparaiso, Indiana commuter line. No definite date has been announced for startup of the Chicago-Peoria train. A Jan 15 target date is set for the 7th SAN DIEGAN and the 2nd SAN JOAQUIN. As of mid-October, political maneuvering to restore Amtrak cuts was slow or non-existent, with Senator Melcher of Montana doing most of the work, and with almost no reward. The Attorney General of Kansas said that legal action on the Amtrak cutbacks has almost no chance of success. However, the lawsuit against Amtrak (see page 5) will be in court beginning Oct 26, so action isn't entirely dead.....

THE BACKWARDS RUNNING of passenger trains (the SF ZEPHYR) between Denver and Cheyenne that has been so frequently criticized will be eliminated by the building of the new station at Borie, Wyoming, allowing Amtrak to bypass Cheyenne, which will be served by connecting buses. The new glass-box shelter at Borie may be open in late October. The Oct 1-27 Amtrak national timetable shows one set of times at Ogden for the SFZ in the SFZ column and a 35-minute change in SFZ times listed with the DESERT WIND which begins Oct 28.....

THE EMPIRE BUILDER will carry new Superliner cars on revenue runs for the first time on Oct 28 out of Chicago and Oct 29 out of Seattle. Two of the train's three trainsets will be Superliners, with the third being conventional cars, until enough of the new bilevel cars are available. The trains will carry Superliner diner and sleeper as well as coaches. On Oct 28 the cars will be on display in Seattle. The Oct 11 press showing and Oct 13 public showing of Superliner cars in Chicago went off as expected, despite the intervening Oct 12 wreck of the Superliner-equipped SHAWNEE. Amtrak has enough Superliner coaches on hand now to allow for the displays as well as revenue operation. When we last spoke with Amtrak, on Oct 18, we were told that another sleeper will be delivered in the next few days, to be used on the Oct 28 run out of Chicago.....

LAKE SHORE LIMITED went over to HEP (electric) powered equipment. No lounges with HEP are available yet, however..... AMTRAK HAS TECHNICIANS in Europe at this moment looking at what equipment is available there, since it has now been given a new budget to buy new cars. A high priority on its list, Amtrak said, is purchase of new low-level long distance cars for Eastern trains.....

AMTRAK TURBOLINER 381, the ILLINI, at about 6:45pm on Oct 5 while passing thru the Clark Street interlocker in Chicago derailed all wheels of rear power car 65 and struck a girder which ruptured the fuel tank and caused heavy damage to the car structure. One passenger was injured. The power car was moved to Brighton Park for inspection and determination of the cause of the derailment. The train reached Champaign at midnight..... THE PANAMA LIMITED, train 58, while traveling thru Fulton KY at 4:10am on Oct 14 at about 10mph derailed deadhead baggage car 1100 and deadhead hi-level coach 9913, the last two cars on the train. The cars were cut off and the train went on to Chicago after a half-hour delay.....

ICG FREIGHT DERAILMENT at Freeport IL on Sep 18 forced Amtrak to bus passengers on train 371, the BLACK HAWK, from Rockford IL to Dubuque IA. The next day, passengers were bused from Dubuque to Freeport and connected with train 370.....

★ ★ ★

"GREAT RAILWAY JOURNEYS of the World" is the title of a TV travelogue being made by the BBC, and their film crew is now in the U.S. to film in such places as NY-Harrisburg, Chicago-Denver-Cheyenne, on the D&RGW, Ogden-Promontory-Sacramento, and San Jose-Los Angeles. Narrator of the film is Ludovic Kennedy. The film is being sponsored in part by public TV station KCET in Los Angeles,and it will be shown on National Public Television in the U.S. next year. George Pins's private car "Pennsylvania" was used on part of the tour, and E. M. Frimbo was seen aboard. We couldn't learn whether the title has any relation to the 1965 book of the same name mentioned here in issue 189..... DEARBORN, MICHIGAN STATION opens Oct 23...

THE DESERT WIND will get Superliner cars with sleeper service next year, Amtrak said in an Oct 11 press release. For now the train will run with Amfleet coaches, meal service car and baggage car. It will connect in both directions with the SAN FRANCISCO ZEPHYR and RIO GRANDE ZEPHYR. A special round trip coach rate of $42 L.A.-Las Vegas will be offered. Amtrak pointed out that the train brings regular rail service for the first time to Las Vegas since 1971. However, there have been several attempts at that in the intervening years, but we will save that history for our coverage of the train startup later.....

★ ★ ★

SABOTAGE CAUSED DERAILMENT of a 101-car SP freight train at Goleta CA, just north of Santa Barbara, late on the night of Oct 7. Concrete and lumber had been piled on the track, derailing four engines and 39 cars, some carrying deadly chamicals. Homes were evacuated until it was found that no chemicals had leaked. the COAST STARLIGHT line was blocked by the wreck, and passengers were bused between Los Angeles and San Luis Obispo until the line was cleared.....

READER JAMES ASPLUND traveled around the Amtrak system between Aug 27 and Sep 8 and reports that the only train he rode that was on time was the NATIONAL LIMITED. Because of the hurricane after Labor Day, the CHAMPION he rode was 4 hours late into Jacksonville on Sep 5. Then he was involved with a detour of the FLORIDIAN, which was routed off the main line at Bainbridge GA thru Cuthbert, Lumpkin, and Richland GA, thence thru Hurtsboro and Ft. Davis into Montgomery AL, due to a freight derailment. After being only one hour late at Thomasville GA, the train was 5 hours late at Montgomery.....

MARK TWAIN ZEPHYR original equipment was found recently in a steam tractor museum at Mount Pleasant IA and purchased by Kansas City banker and train collector Alexander J. Barket. Barket died last July, but the train was brought to Kansas City, where it is being refurbished. Power car is named "Injun Joe".....

THE PIONEER DEPARTED Seattle on Oct 12 with only 13 passengers aboard. The poor publicity for Amtrak in the national press is hurting ridership.....

THE SUNSET LIMITED, train 1, was annulled at New Orleans on Sep 28 due to a work stoppage on the Southern Pacific.....

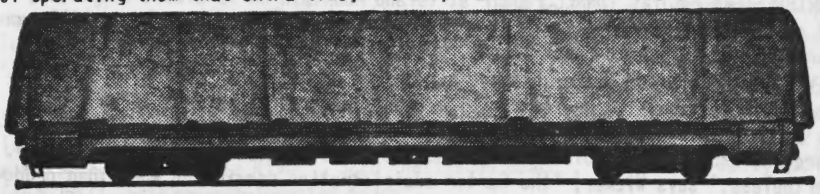
A YOUNG MAN was electrocuted in NY's Penn Station on Sep 8 when he climbed on top of George Pins's private car "Pennsylvania" and accidently touched a catenary wire above. His woman companion was injured and thrown to the ground. Pins was

giving a party aboard the car, and the two evidently climbed to the roof to bang on it as a party prank..... EASTBOUND SAN FRANCISCO ZEPHYR derailed two cars at the western edge of West Burlington IA the morning of Sep 26, blocking both tracks. The train was to proceed after a 4-hour delay. No injuries were reported. The westbound SFZ derailed the rear trucks of engine 507 in the siding at Omaha while meeting a BN freight. The train departed after a 3hr, 40min delay. A freight engine was then added at Lincoln. There were no injuries.....

HONG KONG'S SUBWAY opened, with the first train operating on Sep 30.....

THE DISCONTINUANCE OF the NORTH COAST HIAWATHA has caused some bitter feelings in the Northwest. Said Chris Peck in a Spokane newspaper column, "Contemptible, despicable, detestable, wretched and shoddy better describe rail passenger service around the inland Northwest." Continued the columnist, "This deterioration of the trains isn't funny anymore. It makes you want to sock somebody in the jaw and wake them up. The life and impending death of the NORTH COAST HIAWATHA typifies the wrong-headed vision of whoever controls Amtrak in this part of the country"...

AMTRAK MIGHT CHARGE the cities and states who got the court order to continue the three hit list trains a few days beyond their Oct 1 termination, for the costs of operating them that extra time, the corporation indicated.....



INTRODUCING THE NEW AMTRAK SUPERLINER.

AMTRAK RAN NEWSPAPER ads in Chicago announcing the Oct 13 Superliner equipment display, using the above illustration..... THE NORTHBOUND LONE STAR that was to have been the last run (the next day's train derailed--see page 4) had already left Houston when a Santa Fe freight derailed at Rosenberg TX, west of Houston and blocked its passage. The LONE STAR backed up from West Junction to Houston, where it was turned and an MKT engine added to pull the train from Houston to Sealy to detour on the MKT. A delay of 4-5 hours was anticipated.....

THE NATIONAL LIMITEDS on Sep 28, due to a Conrail freight derailment at Cadiz Junction OH, had to detour between Columbus and Pittsburgh via Bert and Crestline, missing no passenger stops but losing about 3 hours' time.....

CONRAIL MAIL TRAIN 11 derailed 5 cars in the Pittsburgh station on Sep 19, blocking tracks 4 & 5. Trains 30, 31, 40 & 41, the NATIONAL and BROADWAY, had to use the Panhandle bridge and the south side of the station, delaying them 45 minutes...

SANTA FE FREIGHT derailed 8 cars at Bellville TX at 5:50pm on Sep 21, causing the southbound LONE STAR to detour from Temple TX via the MKT into Houston, with a 2-hour delay. Buses were provided for stations missed. The following day, due to another freight derailment north of Ft. Worth TX, the two LONE STARS were stopped either side of the derailment and passengers bused between, with delays of 3-4 hours..... THE NEW YORKER'S Oct 15 issue features a cover painting by Paul Degen of a 3-car passenger train descending from the sky on a spiral track.....

JAPAN'S BULLET TRAINS between Kyoto and Tokyo were stopped when a moderate earthquake shook the area on Oct 15, automatically cutting power to the trains.....

AMERICA'S MOST EXPENSIVE train ride? The White Pass and Yukon recently raised its fares to $35 for either the Bennett excursion or a one-way Skagway-Whitehorse trip. Since the meal at Bennett costs $2.50, the Bennett turn totals $32.50 for 82 miles, a rate of about 40¢ per mile..... INTERSTATE COMMERCE COMMISSION chairman Daniel O'Neal will quit the agency at about year-end. His replacement is rumored to be Darius Gaskins, said to be favored by President Carter.....

RTN SAVES MONEY and helps with rail travel problems: from time to time readers tell us how we saved them a bundle by mentioning special fares, impending fare changes, etc. And in a few recent cases we helped readers get Amtrak tickets in the gas-shortage summer rush by advising them to contact travel agents who advertise in RTN. A New Jersey reader was planning a coast-to-coast trip in June for his family and "...we were told by the experts that we could not obtain a pass or reservations, so don't even try." He wrote to Let's Travel Tours in Southern California and "Ed Von Nordeck performed a miracle. He got our Railpass and all our reservations confirmed." An Ohio reader got "stuck" in San Francisco in late June with 7 others and couldn't get thru to the Amtrak number. He called Great Western Tours, who got them all aboard promptly with "no problem".....

READER DAVID TIPTON notes that he was the author of the statement "The DOT plan to reduce Amtrak is a scheme conceived in absurdity, advanced in stupidity and espoused with rigidity." He said that in an op-ed piece he did for the Ft. Worth Star-Telegram in June. Joe Vranich said the same thing in his letter in RTN #192, probably unknovingly picking up the line from news clippings he'd been reading.....

NORTHWESTERN PACIFIC TUNNEL repair at Island Mountain CA is almost completed, ahead of schedule, and when it is an SP Directors Special passenger train will run Oakland-Willits-Eureka to check it out, possibly on Oct 27 and 28.....

NEW YORK TIMES'S Tom Wicker did another column on Amtrak's funding in early October. He notes that the new Amtrak bill grants more funds and not as many cutbacks as originally conceived, and that Carter is supporting an expanded mass transit program and has Neil Goldschmidt, a public transit advocate, as DOT Secretary. "Nevertheless," says Wicker, "the Carter administration remains no more than grudgingly interested in intercity rail service"..... AN AMTRAK DINER being switched in the Los Angeles yards on Aug 28 struck and overturned a Santa Fe boxcar, injuring slightly four employees in the diner..... NEW YORK STATE is conducting an on-board survey of rail passengers in the Empire Corridor between Oct 14 and 27 to be used as a basis for planning further improvement of facilities and services.....

FIRST GE-REBUILT FL9 diesel was delivered by Conrail to the MTA on Oct 6. It is a one-of-a-kind engine, in an all silver body with blue stripe in center that curves on the nose, with a big "M" logo on the sides, and no Conrail lettering. Engine number is 5043..... ROCK ISLAND COMMUTER service was to begin Oct 8 after a strike that started on Aug 28. The ICC ordered the work resumption.....

News in this issue is updated thru October 18, 1979.

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WITH PRE-PAID SUBSCRIPTION

RTN is offering a free bumperstrip with NEW subscriptions mailed no later than Nov. 30, 1979. The new subscription can be your own or a gift. Here's a chance to do holiday gift shopping early and get a free gift yourself--one red-&-black bumperstrip "I'd Rather Be Riding the Train" with a one-year prepaid subscription. Use coupon on rear cover or your own stationery. Be sure to request the free gift. $12 per year--24 issues. RAIL TRAVEL NEWS, Box 9007, Berkeley CA 94709.

CARS & CONSISTS

*NATIONAL LIMITED, train 31, last run, Columbus OH Oct 1: engines 310 (in new paint scheme), 265; cars 1211, 2991 "Beatrice V. MacDonald", 20223, 21859, 21802, 21135, 21801, (deadheads to Beech Grove, fire damage and broken windows:) 21124, 20027. (Engine 310 removed before Kansas City--at Indianapolis?). Same, train 30, last run, Kansas City Sep 30: engines 316, 262; cars 1221, 1264, 2985, 20235, 21884, 21877, 21808, 21807, (deadheads to Beech Grove:) 1303 buffer car, 2020 "Silver Siesta", 1186, 2027 "Loch Ness", 2625 "Pacific Peak", 4855, 8101, 4862, heater car 660.

*LONE STAR, train 15, last full-service run, Kansas City Oct 1: engines 525, 530; cars 1036, 2217 "Indian Pony", 8094, 9921, 9964, 9926, 3392, 2365 "Regal Hill", private car "Bluebonnet" to Ft. Worth. Same, train 16, last full-service run, Kansas City Oct 1: engines 527, 509, 517; cars 3391 deadhead, 1077, 2253 "Star Range",8019, 9913, 9960, 9934, 9956, 9985, 9959, 9955, 9963, 9902, 5606, 3381, 2369 "Regal Stream".

*MKT Board of Directors Special, Kansas City Sep 20, enroute to Dallas: (Amtrak equipment) engines 405, 409 (E A units); cars 2750 "Palm Arch", 2655 "Silver Valley", 2200 "Silver Dove", 3391, 8050, BN lounge "Deschutes River", BN business car "Missouri River".

*FLORIDIAN, train 56, last run, Louisville Oct 8: engines 304, 464; cars 2536 "Thrush", 4434, 4417, 8015, 5413, 5411. (39 minutes late.) Same, last full-service run, Louisville Oct 1 (actually in after midnight, so Oct 2): engines 302, 638; cars 1409, 2797 "Middle River", 3220 "Hollywood Beach", 5412, 4423, 8334, 3331, 5463, 5477, private car "Hampton Roads".

*LONE STAR, train 15, Kansas City Oct 7 (run as separate section for New England Fun Tour & 4hrs late due to late #49 arrival in Chicago): engines 513, 649; cars 1251, 5606, 5664, 3381 "Concho", 8025, 2670 "Silver Terrain", 2215 "Indian Mesa", 2214 "Indian Lake", 2212 "Indian Falls", 2755 "Palm Lore".

QUOTES OF THE WEEK***

"Conrail began operations April 1, 1976, with the mandate to rehabilitate the rail facilities and revitalize the rail freight service of the Northeast and Midwest... Today, as a result of a $2.545 billion investment in improvements to physical assets, Conrail has never been in better shape to provide that service--and to end the need for taxpayers' support."

--From Conrail ad in New York Times, Oct 4.

"Conrail's full-page ad in the Oct. 4 Times is a slap in the face for the thousands of commuters who struggle daily with the outrageous conditions on the New York commuter lines. The ad says, 'Conrail's performance to date demonstrates that it can manage the railroad and deal with problems within its control.' Conrail management seems to have forgotten that part of its job is to run the commuter lines as well as the freight lines. The $2.3 billion of taxpayer money that has gone into Conrail (which will never in our lifetime be repaid) is supposed to be used in part to help the commuter system."

--From Congressman Peter A. Peyser's letter to the Times, Oct 10.
(Peyser has ordered the USRA to investigate Conrail performance.)

SLIP OF THE MONTH CLUB***

"Amtrak was to have cut four of its five remaining long distance passenger trains today. Amtrak said its resources are spread too thin and it is therefore necessary to concentrate only on freight hauling and short distance commuter runs."

--NBC radio news item heard in Florida Sep 30.

*Santa Fe Directors Special running from Chicago (Corwith) to Colorado Springs Sep 29: (All ATSF equipment) engines 5947, 5948, 5942 (FP45's); generator car 131; cars 64 "Regal Hunt", 65 "Regal Lane", 63 "Regal Crest", 67 "Regal Manor", dome lounge 60, diner 61, lounge 62, 68 "Regal Spa", 66 "Regal Lark", business cars 51 "Topeka" 53 "Mountainair", 52 "Atchison", 50 "Santa Fe", track insp. car 89.

RAIL FANTRIPS

Daily thru Oct 27: one-day tour Vancouver-Seattle RT on Amtrak, Superliner cars. $18, children 12-16 $16.50, 2-11 $9, senior citizens $16.50 U.S. funds. Skyline Travel Service, 563 Granville, Vancouver B.C. V6C 1X6 Canada. 604-685-6102.

Nov 3: 2nd annual and possibly last steam double-header on Sierra RR. Jamestown-Oakdale CA, RT. Runbys, buffet meal, etc. $25, kids 5-14 $12.50, family fares. Jumps Tours, PO Box 816, Glendale CA 91209. 209-984-3953.

Nov 3: Special train Mexicali-Puerto Penasco, Mexico RT. Buses from San Diego. Reservations required. Pacific Southwest Rwy Museum Association, Box 12096, San Diego CA 92112. 714-224-4381.

One Rail Fantrips listing is free. Send full info to: RAIL TRAVEL NEWS, Fantrips Dept., PO Box 9007, Berkeley CA 94709.

EXPRESS ADS

TRAINS!!! We know them!!! We ride them!!! We sell train tickets!!! Call us for tickets and reservations for your next trip!!! GREAT WESTERN TOURS, 639 Market St., Suite 900, San Francisco 94105. (415) 398-2994. P.S. We sell air tickets, too.

TIMETABLES - Public & Employee New list monthly. SSAE for latest list. Compendium of AMTRAK timetables, 50¢. CARL LOUCKS, 199 Wayland, Hamden CT 06518.

JOIN THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF TIMETABLE COLLECTORS. $12 annual membership brings two regular publications and many benefits for the collector. Sample publication free. Tom Coval, Membership Director, 21 E. Robin Rd, Holland PA 18966.

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VISITING PHILADELPHIA? First read "Delaware Valley Rails", the complete railroad and rail transit guide to the region's 15 counties. 192 pages of facts, rosters, maps, and photos. Flyer available. $9 (Pennsylvanians add 54¢ tax); $10 outside U.S. Order from: John R. Pawson, Box 411, Willow Grove PA 19090.

For sale: THE WONDERFUL WORLD OF RAILROAD TIMETABLES. A delightful book, 100 pages, 70 illustrations, only $7.95 postpaid. Tom Coval, 21 E. Robin Road, Holland PA 18966.

50 Different Railroad Postcards $4.50, 100 different $7.95 postpaid. Joseph Lajoie, 22 Stevens Street, Methuen, Mass. 01844.

AMTRAK SLIDES: RTN reader wishes to trade color slides of Western Amtrak trains for Eastern Amtrak trains. Can trade slides of SAN DIEGANS, COAST STARLIGHT and SOUTHWEST LIMITED in various locations. Interested in non-Amfleet Eastern trains. Mark Johnston, 420 N. Sunnyslope Ave, Pasadena CA 91107.

TROLLEY TRAILS THROUGH THE WEST, Vol. 7 - Northern California $4.00. Back issues $3 each. Moneyback guarantee. Wilson Brothers Publications, Box 712rtn, Yakima WA 98907.

AMTRAK RIDERSHIP FIGURES FOR JULY

Metroliners	145,215	Washington-Montreal	45,944		
NE Corr Conventional	508,360	New York-Florida	91,576		
New Haven-Springfld	32,384	Chicago-NY/Washington	31,048		
NY-Philadelphia	200,885	Chicago-Cincinnati/DC	19,799		
Phila-Harrisburg	95,879	Kansas City-NY/DC	27,236		
NY-Harrisburg	16,744	Chicago-Seattle (N)	23,334		
NY-Buffalo/Detroit	70,894	Chicago-Seattle (S)	22,653		
Chicago-St. Louis	21,140	Chicago-San Francisco	33,234		
Chicago-Milwaukee	30,661	Chicago-Los Angeles	37,272		
Chicago-Detroit	49,551	Chicago-Houston	33,186		
Chicago-Carbondale	15,123	Chicago-New Orleans	30,297		
Chicago-Quincy	9,059	Chicago-Florida	21,513		
L.A.-San Diego	123,891	Chicago-Laredo	25,524		
Seattle-Portland	9,522	L.A.-New Orleans	12,820		
Seattle-Vancouver	8,360	L.A.-Seattle	60,502		
Washington-Cincinnati	7,522	Chicago-NY/Boston	35,903		
Wash.-Martinsburg	22,431	Boston-Newport News	68,813		
Oakland-Bakersfield	10,208	New York-Savannah	56,721		
New York-Montreal	14,724	Seattle-Salt Lake	16,255		
Chicago-Port Huron	11,994	Boston-Tri-State	8,843		
Chicago-Dubuque	6,320	NY-New Orleans	30,342		
St. Paul-Duluth	7,905	Special trains	3,132		

Amtrak released these ridership figures on Sep 25. We are now publishing these data one month at a time, as they are released.

Total July ridership systemwide was 2,154,719--once more over the two-million mark, and up 27.2% from 1978. NE Corridor total was 999,467, up 20.3 percent. Short distance was up 32.1% to 419,305, and long distance was up 34.4 to 732,615. Every route in the system was up except Duluth-St. Paul, down 18.3.

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Early 1979 issues are available at 45¢ each (nos. 183 thru 188) and 50¢ each (no. 189 to present) postpaid. RAIL TRAVEL NEWS, PO Box 9007, Berkeley CA 94709.